

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

REPORT

ON THE

LIVESTOCK STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1924,

BY

H. L. SEMMENS, Acting Government Statist.

(BULLETIN No. 9 OF 1925.)

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.—REPORT ON THE LIVESTOCK STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1924.

FOR several years the statistical details relating to our flocks and herds have been collected for the year ended 30th June, but it having been decided that all Australian States should collect statistics in respect of livestock as at 31st December, the particulars for South Australia are now presented for the year ended 31st December, 1924.

The previous count having been taken as at 30th June, 1924, the present numbers are only six months later, but particulars of slaughtering, wool clip, lambing, &c., are for the full year 1924, the slaughtering and lambing overlapping the returns for the year ended 30th June, 1924.

Throughout this report the figures in parentheses are those for 1923-24, inserted for comparative purposes.

Cattle.—400,423 (413,272), decrease 12,849, or 3.11 per cent. This decrease is general throughout the whole State, and also as regards all classes of cattle. Although the number of cattle is lower than at the previous count it is still much higher than the normal number, and exceeds any year between 1893 and 1921. There is also the fact to be noted that more cattle and less sheep are being slaughtered, and that even though there is a decrease in the herds of cattle it is more than counterbalanced by the estimated increase in the sheep flocks to 30th June, 1925. Dairy cows, in milk, numbered 92,810 (93,073); dairy cows, dry, 40,809 (43,365); heifers, over one year of age, 29,788 (32,339); the total of dairying cattle being 163,407 (168,777); calves, under one year, 70,565 (74,987); and other cattle 166,451 (169,508). Of the 29,788 heifers, 11,785 were reported to be springing, and of the 166,451 other cattle, 83,239 were one year and under three years of age, and 83,212 over three years. The average daily number of cows being milked was advised as 90,992.

Horses.—255,022 (258,489), decrease 3,467, or 1.34 per cent. It is to be noted that there was a decrease of 1,905 in the number of foals dropped. The following are the numbers of horses under the various headings collected:—Under one year old (foals), 11,776; one year and under four years, fillies, 14,917; colts and geldings, 17,346; four years and over, stallions, 1,233; mares, 102,459; and geldings, 107,291.

Sheep.—6,359,240 (6,596,875), decrease 237,635. This decrease in the flocks does not mean that our sheep industry has had a set-back, for on the contrary it has made further progress. The figures as at 30th June, 1924, included the effective 1924 winter lambing to the time of tailing, and from that date to the 31st December there would be only a slight increase from the spring lambing, and the net imports, whereas on the other hand there would be six months slaughtering and mortality losses.

Allowing for the further slaughterings and mortality to the 30th June, 1925, and the winter lambing, it is estimated that there would be approximately 7,100,000 sheep in the State on the 30th June, 1925, an increase of 500,000 for the 12 months. The number of sheep has only been over 7,000,000 at three previous counts, *i.e.*, in 1890, 1891, and 1892.

This increase is the result of (1) a tendency to revert to grazing instead of wheatgrowing; (2) a net importation of 146,000 sheep from the other States, (3) splendid pastoral rains and a good lambing, (4) the repetition of the experience of the previous year in slaughtering—that is, a tendency to consume more cattle and less sheep—and (5) practically none slaughtered for export.

Regarding the numbers as at 31st December compared with the previous 30th June, the ewes increased from 2,975,240 to 3,179,314, which is another proof of the upbuilding of our flocks. The slaughterings, &c., as mentioned before, would account for the decrease in the number of lambs from 1,590,535 to 1,446,265, and other sheep from 2,031,000 to 1,733,661. Of the other sheep, 79,805 were classed as rams, and 1,653,856 as wethers.

Breeds of Sheep.—The numbers of the various breeds of sheep were collected for the first time, the following particulars being obtained. There were stated to be 5,607,944 pure-bred Merinos, 27,624 Corriedale, 4,245 Dorset Horn, 1,839 Lincoln, 2,061 Shropshire, 589 English Leicester, 246 Southdown, 215 Border Leicester, 207 Suffolk, 150 Hampshire Downs, 81 Romney Marsh, and 16,899 other pure bred, of which the breeds were not stated. In addition there were 442,637 classed as Merino comebacks, and 254,503 as crossbred. The Merino sheep represent 88 per cent. of the total flocks, Merino comebacks 7 per cent., other pure breeds 1 per cent., and crossbred 4 per cent.

Pigs.—80,988 (73,414), increase 7,574, or 10.32 per cent.

Goats.—7,461 (7,596), decrease 135. The Angora goats, mostly crossbred, numbered 1,674, but only very few are shorn, 310lbs. of mohair being all that was obtained.

Other Stock.—Camels 4,076 (3,207), mules 921 (810), donkeys 3,383 (3,360), and ostriches 534 (611).

Lambing.—2,600,089 (2,572,716) ewes were mated, and 1,623,945 (1,601,039) lambs were marked, the effective drop averaging 62.46 (62.23) per cent. These figures are naturally very much the same, both including the 1924 winter lambing, the former also including the 1924 spring lambing, while the latter also included the 1923 spring lambing.

Particulars were collected of the number of ewes mated or intended to be mated for the 1925 lambing, and in a number of cases the markings were also obtained, and it is estimated that 2,700,000 ewes were mated, the markings averaging 62 per cent., representing 1,674,000 lambs. The outside pastoral districts probably averaged 65 per cent., the North-Western portion being particularly good, with 80 per cent., but in the North-Eastern it was barely 50 per cent. Within counties the average is estimated to be 60 per cent.; the Western and Upper North Divisions not being so good as usual.

Slaughterings.—There is an unavoidable overlapping of six months in the slaughterings for the years ended 30th June and 31st December, 1924. The following table gives the details:—

Year.	Sheep and		
	Lambs.	Cattle.	Pigs.
1921-22	1,208,347	95,323	102,854
1922-23	1,290,669	127,294	118,765
1923-24	956,140	140,979	104,393
1924	933,426	155,050	102,089

There were only 13,079 sheep and lambs and 3,237 cattle slaughtered for export.

Milking Machines.—The use of machines for milking is being widely extended. Advices received indicate 369 being used, made up as follows:—118 milking 2 cows; 166, 3; 67, 4; 3, 5; and 15, 6.

Registration of Bulls.—Under the Dairy Cattle Improvement Act, 1921, there were 4,668 bulls registered during the year 1924-25 against 5,051 in 1923-24. The fees received during the year totalled £2,302, the amount at credit of the fund on 30th June, 1925, being £4,392.

Imports and Exports of Livestock (excluding Interstate trade by sea, no record).—The imports of sheep for year ended 30th June, 1925, exceeded the exports by 145,710, cattle by 40,849, and horses by 1,647. During the last five years the imports of sheep in excess of the exports have averaged annually 83,228, and cattle 31,606.

Wool Clip.—The particulars collected for the years ended 30th June and 31st December, 1924, would really represent two distinct clips, the former the 1923 and the latter the 1924, and hence are strictly comparable. 6,324,158 (5,972,911) sheep were reported as shorn, and the clip of wool obtained was 51,779,884 (49,964,235) lbs., averaging sheep and lambs 8.19 (8.37) lbs. per fleece, sheep 9.77 (9.58) lbs. and lambs 2.62 (2.74) lbs. Including the estimated wool on local skins exported 5,433,789 (6,540,826) lbs., and fellmongered 983,450 (1,093,022) lbs., the total production is estimated at 58,197,123 (57,578,083) lbs.

Market Prices of Stock.—Comparing the average market prices of stock for the calendar years 1923 and 1924, increases are noted as regards sheep and pigs, and decreases for cattle. The yearly averages of prime Merino wethers rose from £2 3s. 0d. to £2 11s. 3d.; ewes, £1 14s. 9d. to £2 1s. 6d.; lambs, £1 11s. 3d. to £1 16s. 9d.; baconers, £4 11s. 6d. to £5 1s. 0d.; and porkers, £3 0s. 3d. to £3 11s. 9d.; while prime bullocks fell from £16 17s. 6d. to £14 9s. 0d.; and cows, £10 9s. 0d. to £9 17s. 0d.

Oversea Exports.—The exports to oversea countries of pastoral and dairying products for the years 1924-25 and 1923-24 were valued at £6,090,371 (£5,623,559), the principal items being wool £5,070,164 (£4,644,686), skins and hides £716,456 (£624,417), butter £171,378 (£223,255), meats £45,669 (£62,834), tallow £65,219 (£40,723), and other £21,485 (£27,644).

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.—LIVESTOCK STATISTICS.

Return showing the Number of Cattle, Horses, Sheep, and Pigs in each County and Division of the State as at December 31st, 1924, in Comparison with June 30th, 1924.

County and Division.	Cattle.				Horses.		Sheep and Lambs.		Pigs.	
	Total.		Dairying.		Horses.		Sheep and Lambs.		Pigs.	
	30/6/24.	31/12/24.	30/6/24.	31/12/24.	30/6/24.	31/12/24.	30/6/24.	31/12/24.	30/6/24.	31/12/24.
I. CENTRAL DIVISION—										
Adelaide	31,052	31,304	24,880	25,893	20,903	19,552	140,789	149,667	12,060	13,424
Carnarvon	925	822	544	527	1,180	1,193	51,770	50,846	137	195
Eyre	8,029	7,727	5,479	5,299	5,488	5,761	133,389	123,423	2,063	2,379
Fergusson	8,954	8,676	5,395	5,211	14,508	14,422	183,616	179,333	2,356	2,390
Gawler	10,744	10,501	7,498	7,367	11,520	11,359	115,992	107,757	4,054	4,003
Hindmarsh	16,602	14,893	11,304	10,802	5,815	5,808	193,655	191,435	5,568	6,711
Light	13,716	13,320	9,775	9,590	12,824	12,536	116,796	125,711	4,218	5,306
Sturt	13,721	13,092	9,229	9,211	6,446	6,523	231,692	227,210	2,985	3,174
II. LOWER NORTH DIVISION—										
Burra	4,430	4,148	2,305	2,134	3,474	3,554	242,988	244,054	482	551
Daly	9,916	9,822	6,425	6,249	18,668	18,529	190,253	176,909	3,687	3,470
Kimberley	2,096	1,755	1,093	913	1,261	1,125	122,928	118,604	201	209
Stanley	11,632	10,671	8,291	7,784	17,999	16,835	291,228	289,926	3,979	4,930
Victoria	13,383	13,338	8,166	7,645	16,029	15,512	275,735	279,661	4,687	5,327
III. UPPER NORTH DIVISION—										
Blachford	2,880	2,461	564	589	928	819	70,683	54,214	180	224
Dalhousie	9,624	8,993	6,395	5,859	6,748	6,324	202,114	176,937	1,573	1,907
Derby	54	33	10	17	88	80	22,114	19,240	—	2
Frome	12,372	12,428	6,944	6,954	9,558	9,492	221,078	192,958	2,149	2,674
Granville	3,198	2,696	1,257	969	1,120	989	131,309	91,948	207	164
Hanson	2,537	1,586	516	416	1,013	835	104,633	76,604	163	194
Herbert	3,579	2,372	1,212	972	1,175	1,142	116,173	92,144	137	115
Lytton	1,409	1,106	104	26	160	149	69,752	48,923	—	—
Newcastle	5,407	4,625	1,642	1,608	1,617	1,701	95,521	72,145	300	253
Taunton	3,327	3,084	47	59	417	496	71,387	61,401	6	10
IV. SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION—										
Buckingham	1,860	1,744	1,309	1,253	2,848	2,728	154,903	145,386	301	306
Cardwell	825	746	127	175	584	490	20,766	22,668	140	327
Grey	40,936	30,979	18,213	16,193	10,506	9,159	478,448	470,677	8,965	7,703
MacDonnell	1,593	1,761	849	750	1,575	1,601	178,697	178,631	136	164
Robe	4,468	4,246	2,385	2,616	3,056	2,790	306,362	322,571	285	344
V. WESTERN DIVISION—										
Bosanquet	83	114	30	30	50	106	40,593	52,077	5	—
Burton	618	664	358	381	1,885	1,915	7,139	5,364	231	330
Dufferin	297	260	179	174	1,500	1,412	12,979	13,871	205	127
Flinders	3,273	3,030	1,978	1,914	4,331	4,348	166,857	171,470	766	1,092
Hopetoun	298	246	183	167	718	696	39,432	32,633	97	70
Jervois	3,182	2,862	1,900	1,824	5,810	5,578	92,961	92,077	678	872
Kintore	334	356	221	223	1,077	1,065	26,310	32,136	143	181
LeHunte	692	663	444	450	2,239	2,364	5,516	7,015	246	317
Manchester	1,048	1,132	136	183	398	464	70,376	98,984	59	66
Musgrave	1,272	1,203	689	646	2,141	2,119	159,780	152,827	199	261
Robinson	1,338	1,312	844	842	3,902	4,043	111,866	101,906	429	619
Way	913	926	566	551	2,519	2,448	23,229	27,150	459	599
York	919	901	154	129	219	177	14,780	2,925	31	30
VI. MURRAY MALLEE DIVISION—										
Aloert	5,168	5,120	3,260	3,219	6,394	6,425	38,938	40,999	1,443	1,522
Alfred	5,163	4,628	2,680	2,662	7,321	7,407	44,907	45,844	2,415	2,895
Buckleup	2,492	2,566	1,804	1,877	4,396	4,679	21,664	25,356	1,012	1,204
Chandos	3,280	2,999	2,164	2,033	6,162	6,017	38,179	48,650	1,282	1,080
Hamley	872	945	592	676	2,062	2,151	37,621	36,865	208	275
Russell	12,177	11,348	7,622	7,366	3,548	3,213	100,408	95,669	2,363	2,804
Young	489	573	188	176	525	528	56,926	46,373	63	49
SUMMARY.										
CENTRAL DIVISION	103,743	100,335	74,104	73,900	78,684	77,154	1,167,699	1,155,382	33,441	37,582
LOWER NORTH DIVISION	41,457	39,734	26,280	24,725	57,431	55,555	1,123,132	1,109,154	18,036	14,487
UPPER NORTH DIVISION	44,387	39,384	18,691	17,469	22,824	22,027	1,104,764	886,514	4,715	5,543
SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION	49,682	39,476	22,883	20,987	18,569	16,768	1,139,176	1,139,933	9,827	8,844
WESTERN DIVISION	14,267	13,669	7,682	7,514	26,789	26,735	771,818	790,435	3,548	4,564
MURRAY MALLEE DIVISION	29,641	28,179	18,310	18,009	30,408	30,420	338,643	339,756	8,786	9,829
Total counties	283,177	260,777	167,950	162,604	234,705	228,659	5,645,232	5,421,174	73,353	80,849
Outside of counties	130,095	139,646	827	803	23,784	26,363	951,643	938,066	61	139
Grand total of State	413,272	400,423	168,777	163,407	258,489	255,022	6,596,875	6,359,240	73,414	80,988
Increase or decrease	—	-12,849	—	-5,370	—	-3,467	—	-237,635	—	+7,574